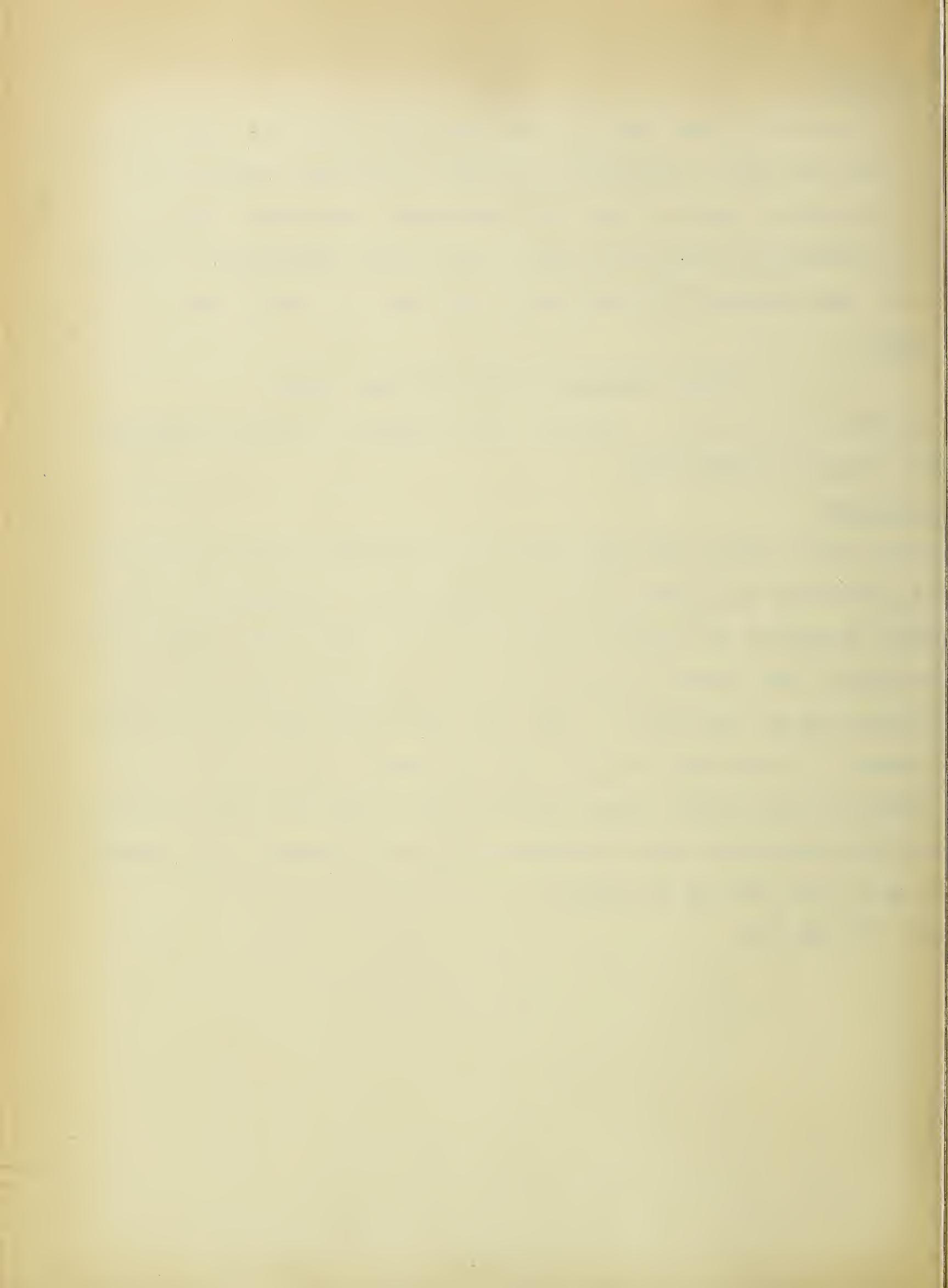


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WLW
CINCINNATI

FORTUNES WASHED AWAY

115
P.M. E.S.T.

A SERIES OF DRAMATIZATIONS OF BETTER LAND USE.

No. 182

"THE MENNONITES"

October 18, 1941

ORGAN THEME: DEEP RIVER

VOICE

We took it for granted that land was everlasting;
We said ownership of the land insured security.
Tools would wear out, men would die --
But the land would remain.

ORGAN: ABRUPT DISCORD

ANNOUNCER

Fortunes Washed Away!

ORGAN: DEEP RIVER, fading behind...

ANNOUNCER

Every schoolboy knows that Columbus discovered America in 1492.
But few know that on that same year, another famous boy was born
in the tiny village of Witmarsum on the northern fringe of Holland.
His name -- Menno Simons -- and from that name sprang a group of
devout worshipers, and prosperous farmers, the Mennonites, the
"plain people". (STERNLY) But like many another group seeking
freedom in those troubled times, they were not wanted!

ORGAN: SOFT RUMBLE

VOICE

Get out of Holland!

ORGAN: LOUDER RUMBLE

VOICE

Get out of Switzerland!

ORGAN: LOUDER RUMBLE

VOICE

Get out of Germany!

ORGAN: LOUDER RUMBLE AND CUT

NARRATOR

Why were the Mennonites persecuted? Because they sought freedom of worship, freedom to live their own lives. (PAUSE) Early the "plain people" became known as thrifty and industrious, noted for their honesty and uprightness. Yet they were not wanted, because some men, obsessed with greed and avarice and lust for power, abhor the sight of others living quietly among themselves. (PAUSE) The Mennonites came to America, the land of freedom.

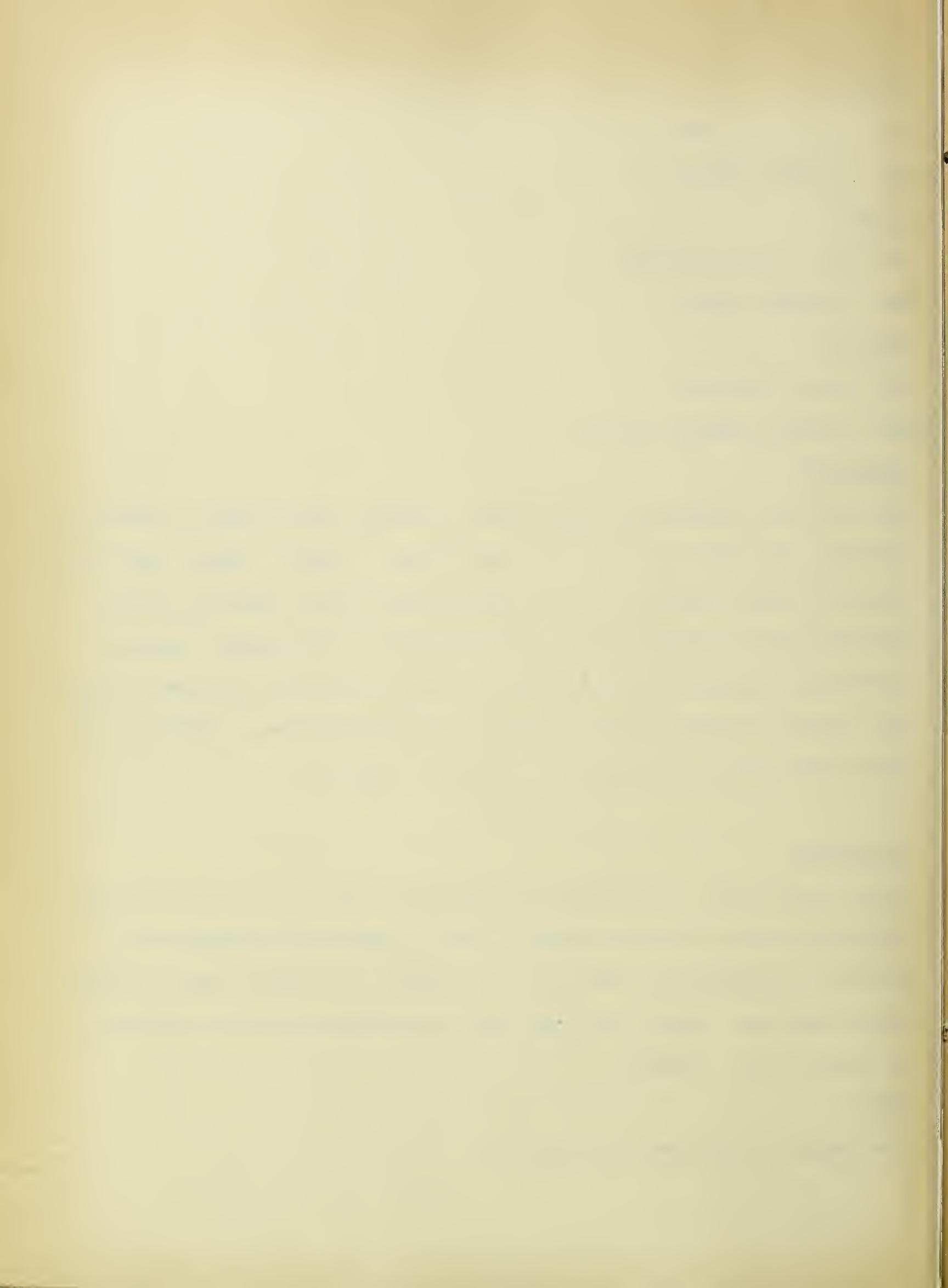
(PAUSE)

ANNOUNCER

On a lovely hill, overlooking Middletown, Ohio, is one of the outstanding farms of Butler County. It is owned and operated by a family of Mennonites, that of A. W. Howe, Jr. But it hasn't always been that way. About ten years ago, his father-in-law called him in for a talk... (FADE)

HOWE

You wanted to see me, Mr. Mosiman?



MOSIMAN

Yes, I do. Sit down.

HOWE

Thanks.

MOSIMAN (clearing throat)

My boy, I'm getting along...

SOUND: Woman sings few notes off mike....

MOSIMAN (shouting)

Oh, Estelle! Estelle!

ESTELLE (fading in)

Did you call me, father?

MOSIMAN

I wasn't calling a guinea hen!

ESTELLE

I'm sorry, father. I have to give a music lesson this afternoon, and I was practicing.

MOSIMAN

Well, sit down over there. This concerns you as much as it does your husband.

HOWE

Say, what's this all about?

MOSIMAN

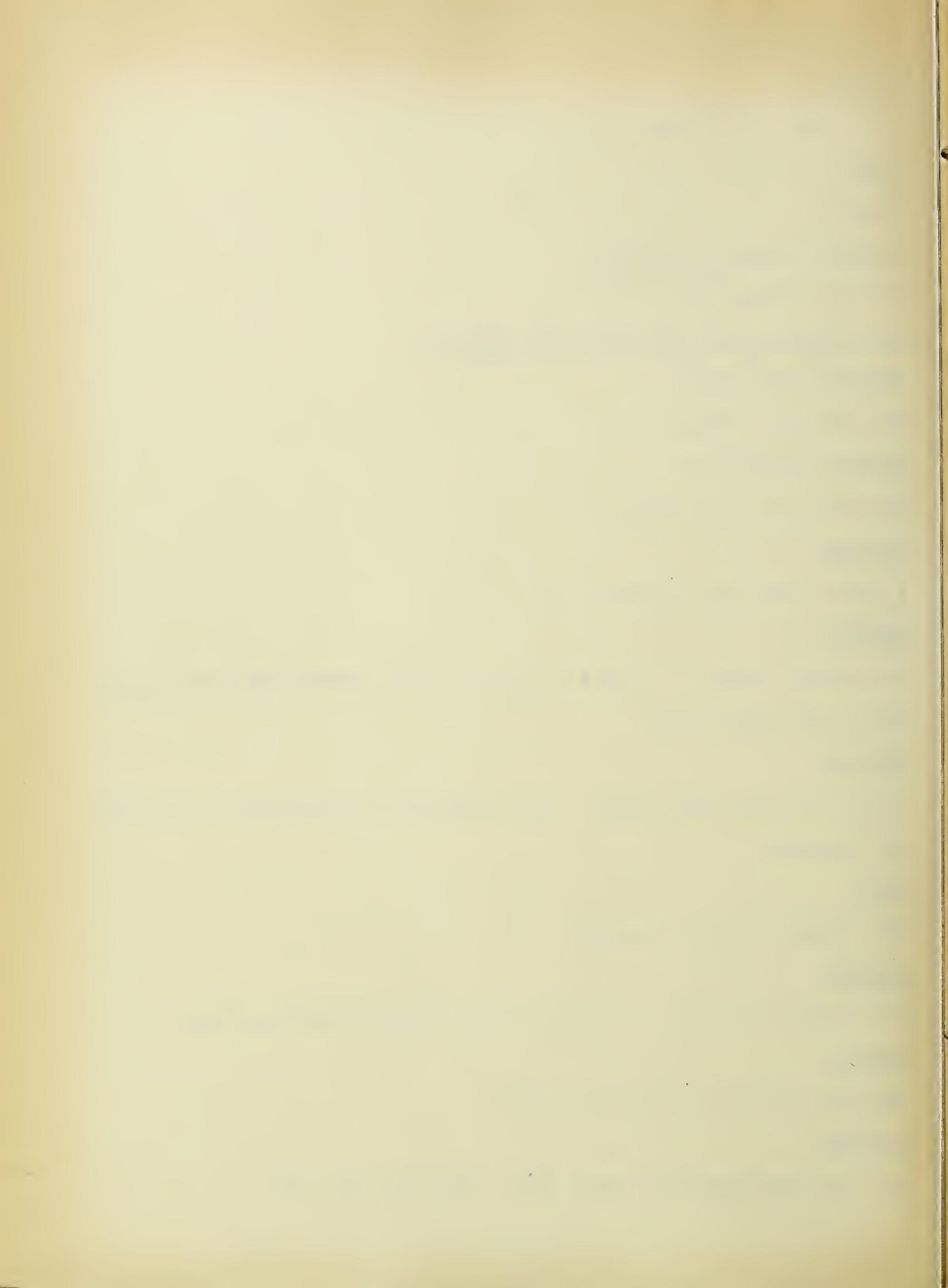
I'm coming to that. I want you two to take over the farm.

ESTELLE

You mean, the one up on the hill?

MOSIMAN

Yes, the one where you were born. What do you say?



HOWE

Well, this is kinda sudden.

MOSIMAN

I mean to live with you, along with my other daughter Ida. But like I started to say, I'm getting along in years -- just about as run down as that farm is.

ESTELLE

That would mean my giving up teaching music, wouldn't it?

MOSIMAN

It would.

ESTELLE

What do you think, Al?

HOWE

Well, here's the way I feel about it. If we went up there...

MOSIMAN

Stop your stalling! Will you or won't you?

HOWE

I will.

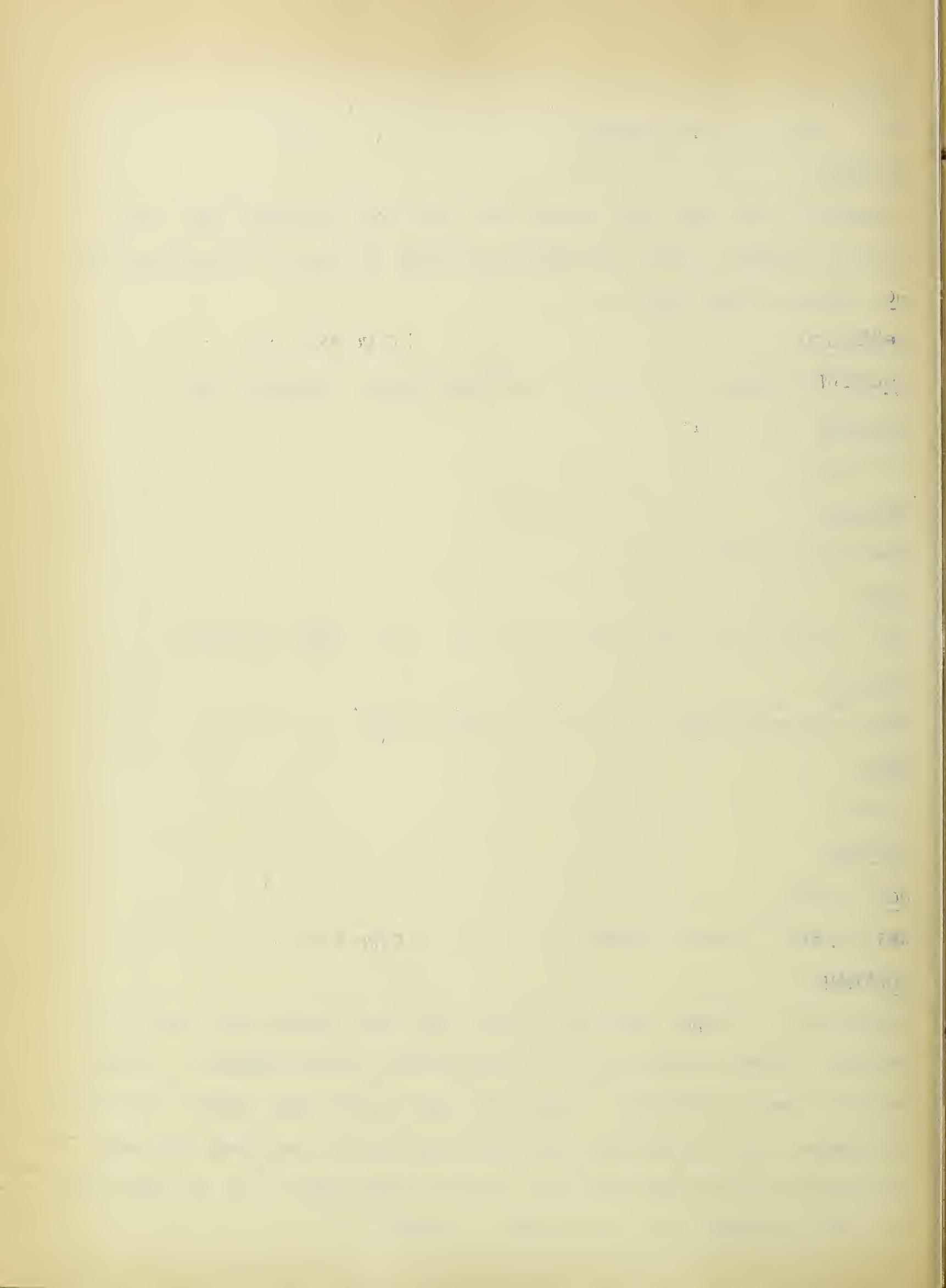
ESTELLE

And I will.

ORGAN: Symbolic music behind...

NARRATOR

Mennonites -- plain people. Bitter was their early lot, rich their reward. Farmers above all, the Mennonites, good farmers. It was said of them in Holland: "they own the finest land, drive the finest equipages, live in the best houses, and are in every way the most industrious people in Holland." But on that day, as A. W. Howe and his wife surveyed their new home....(FADE)



HOWE

Even though I've lived in this neighborhood all my life, Estelle, I didn't realize land could be so desolate. Truly, a fortune has been washed away.

ESTELLE

It does look bad, doesn't it? Those gullies, and all that brush grown up, and dead trees everywhere...

HOWE

I don't believe it'll grow pineapple weed. That's what comes from leaving it in the hands of renters who don't appreciate the value of land.

ESTELLE

I see one good thing.

HOWE

Where?

ESTELLE

Over there to the north. Notice that that field hasn't washed so much.

HOWE

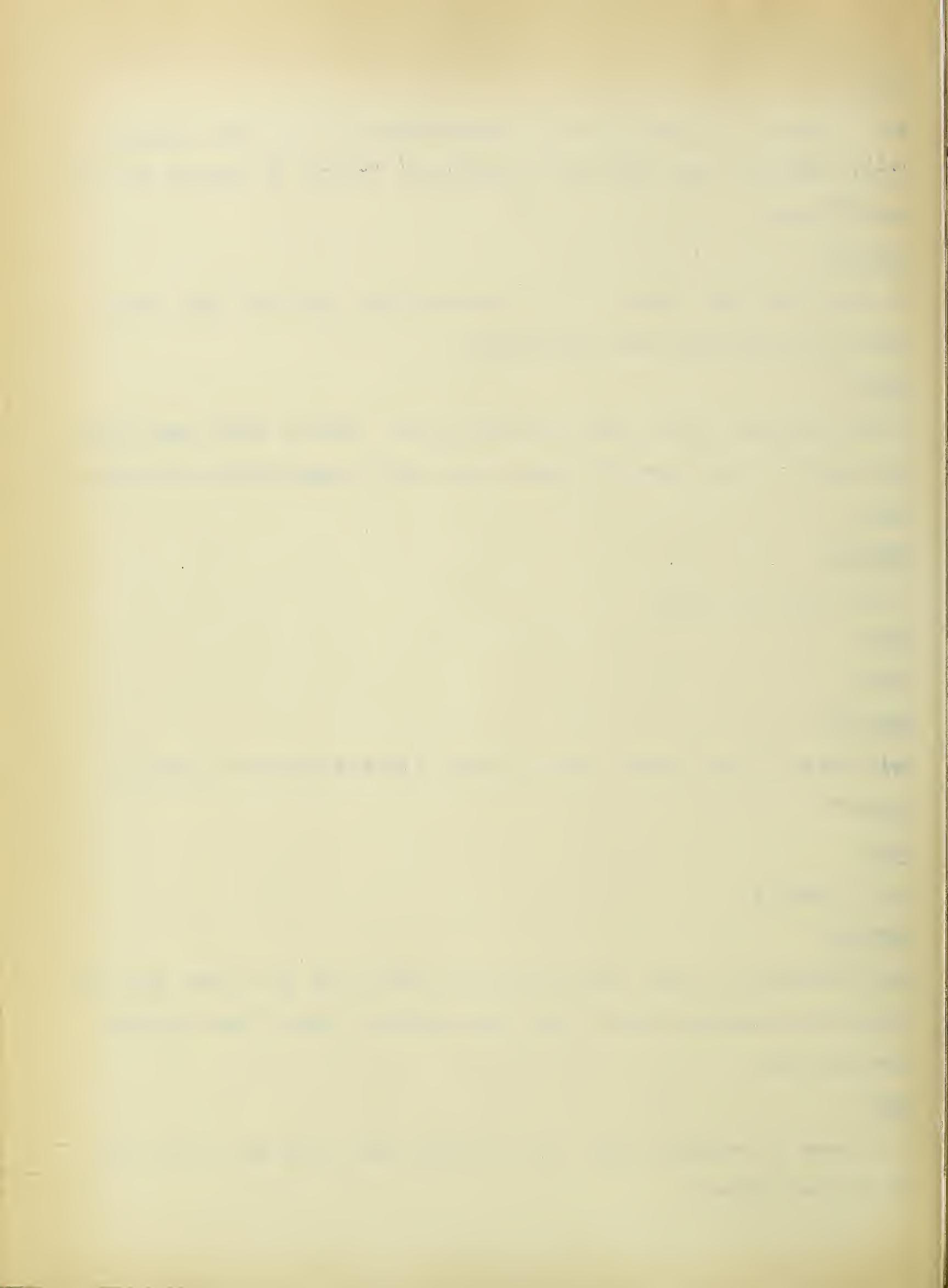
No, it hasn't.

ESTELLE

That's because a long, long time ago, father put up a rock wall all along the boundary line to keep the neighbors water from running down onto us.

HOWE

I'll have to remember that. If we build this farm up, it'll show we're good farmers.



ESTELLE

The first Mennonites were good farmers. When they plowed, they plowed deep to keep their soil mellow. And when they cleared forest land, they worked on the hardest of the trees as well as the smaller growth.

HOWE

Hey! Where'd you learn that?

ESTELLE

Oh, I'm a farmer's daughter!

ORGAN: SYMBOLIC MUSIC BEHIND...

NARRATOR

Mennonites -- plain people. Just when they first came to America is a matter of dispute, but their first permanent settlement was at Germantown, Pennsylvania, "a fertile district with plenty of springs of fresh water, being well supplied with oak, walnut, and chestnut trees, and having besides excellent and abundant pasturage for the cattle." They followed the fertile valleys, such as that along the beautiful Perkiomen Creek which empties into the Schuylkill, followed the Hocking, made settlements in Fairfield County, Ohio. Then came Stark, Mahoning, Medina, Wood, Seneca -- and Butler County. And on the farm of A. W. Howe....(FADE)

OUND: Rain, as if heard from inside room...

ESTELLE

Listen to that rain! It's a regular toad-strangler.

HOWE

Yeah.

ESTELLE

I was reading this report they dug up when they were looking up the Mosiman family tree, and it shows they were farmers just like we are. "They sow all kinds of grain, and have plentiful harvests. They have large meadows which produce a great deal of hay and feed therewith a variety of cattle." Interesting, isn't it?

HOWE

Yeah.

ESTELLE (with exasperation)

Are you listening to me?

HOWE

Huh? Oh, what's that?

ESTELLE

I said...are...you...listening...to...me!

HOWE

Why, to tell the truth, Estelle, I was just thinking about the rain... how much damage it's doing. We've got those long slopes, and they don't have any cover on them, with nothing to protect them...and...

ESTELLE

What are you going to do?

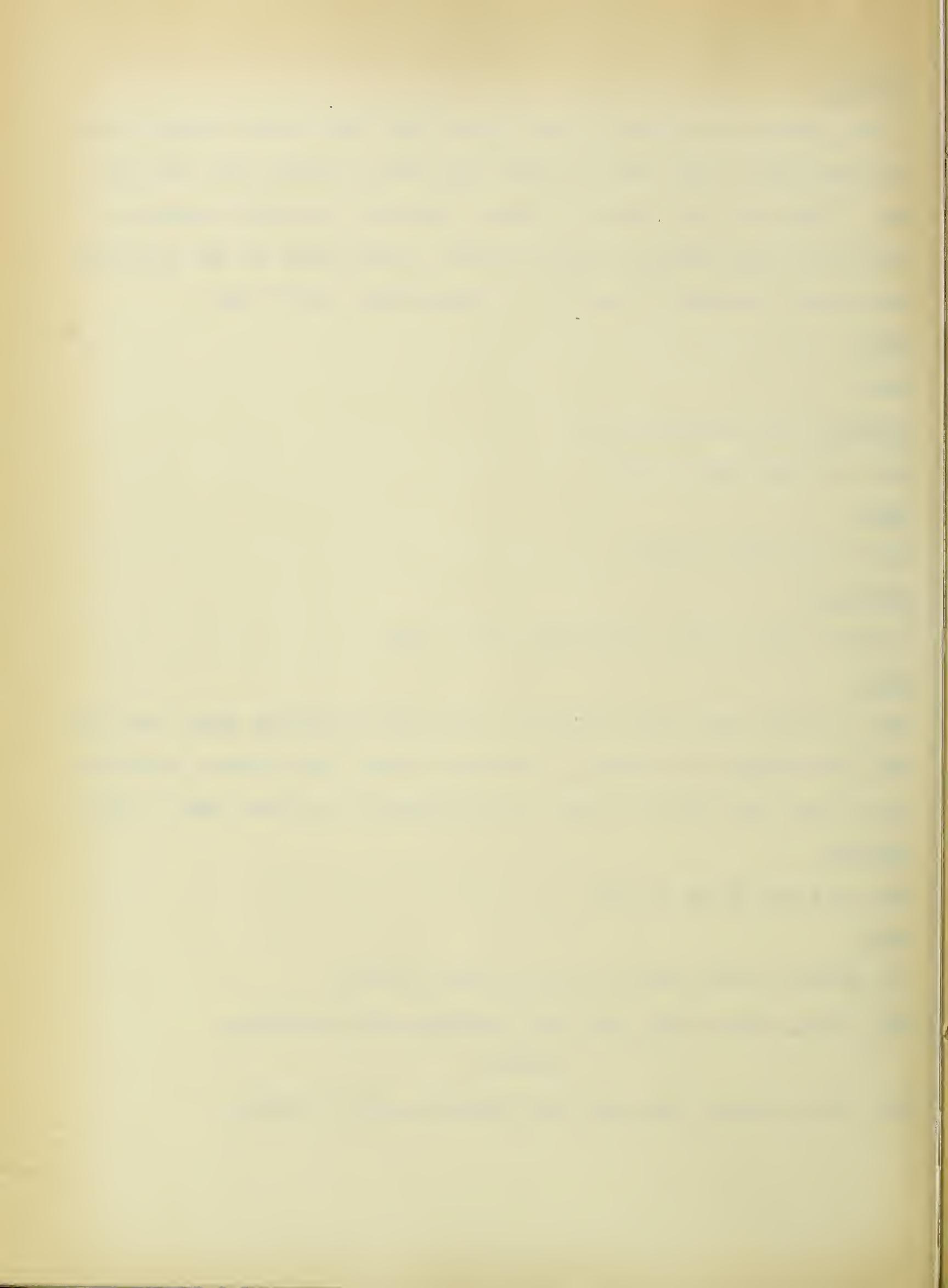
HOWE

I'm going out and take a look at those fields!

SOUND: Door opens, rain and wind increase, door closes...

(PAUSE)

SOUND: Door opens, rain and wind increase, door closes...



ESTELLE

What did you find on your homestead now?

HOWE (stamping feet)

The ground is moving! I tell you, Estelle, the ground is moving! You can see it go, right before your eyes -- down across the fields down into the creek, down into the Miami, down into the Ohio, the Mississippi, and out into the Gulf of Mexico. That's our land that is moving, Estelle, our land!

ESTELLE

What are you going to do?

HOWE (calming down)

I'm going to farm different.

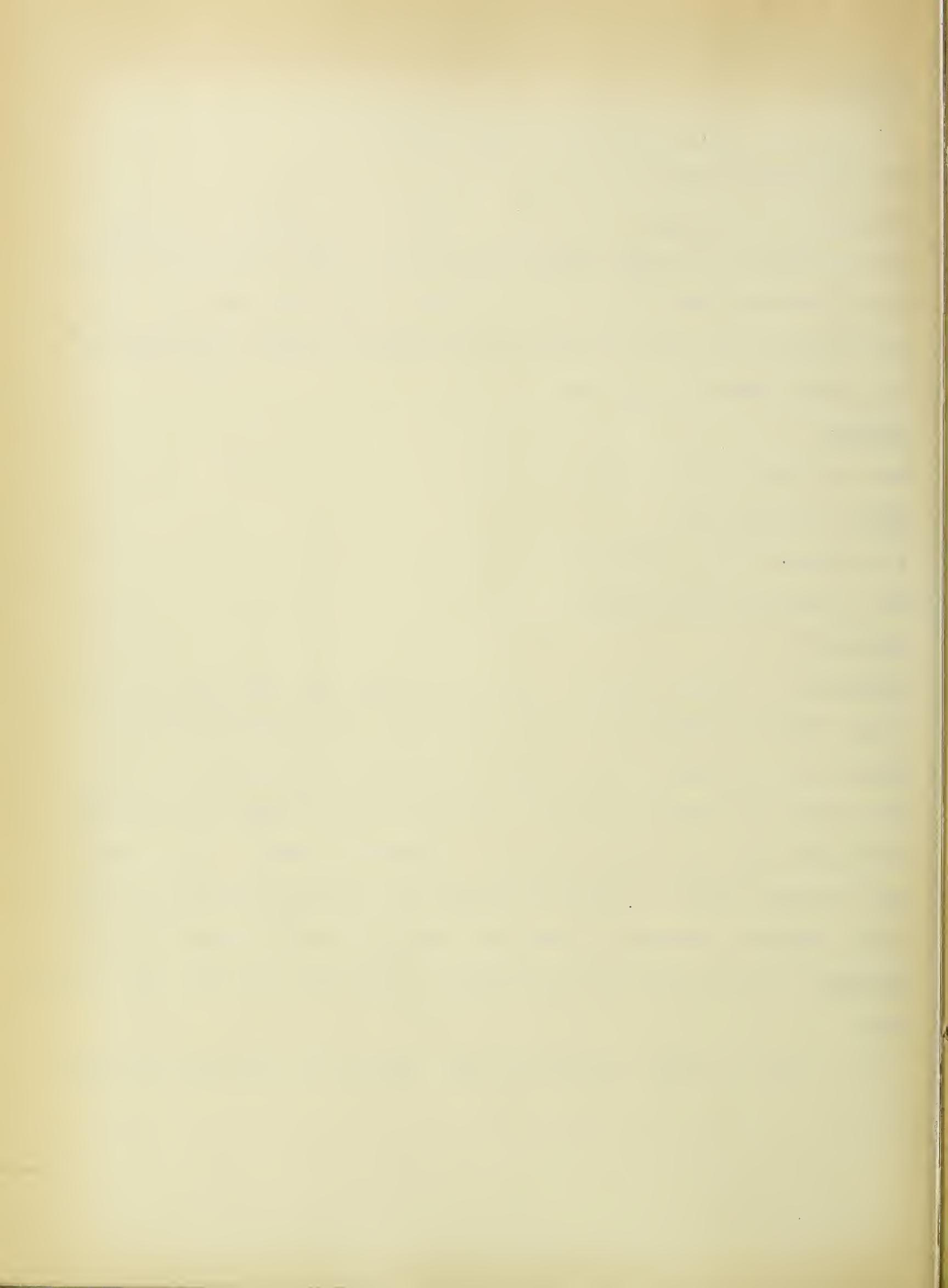
ORGAN: SYMBOLIC MUSIC BEHIND...

NARRATOR

Mennonites -- plain people. They love their God, and they love their land. Notice a Mennonite's barn sometime. It's usually the most important building on the place, for here he must store his crops. Notice the well kept appearance around the home, where he eats and sleeps and says his daily prayers. (CHANGE IN PACE) Well, that was in 1939, and A. W. Howe did change his farming methods, put in strip cropping, terraces, diversion ditches, an all-around farm plan designed to keep the land from moving. And just the other day... (FADE)

HOWE

I don't know if these raspberries are going to be any good this year or not.



ESTELLE

It's been the same down here.

SOUND: A FLOCK OF BIRDS, OR BIRDS AND SINGING CHICKENS

ESTELLE

What's the weather like? Hopper now?

HOWL (Laughing)

Oh, he made the mistake of getting noisy with his electronic fence

SOUND: A FLOCK OF CHICKENS

ESTELLE

There, Belpheo. You won't do that anymore will you?

HOWL

I'll say he won't. Once an animal gets acquainted with an electric fence, he stays clear of it. They're fine things if used right, especially good for rotation pastures.

ESTELLE

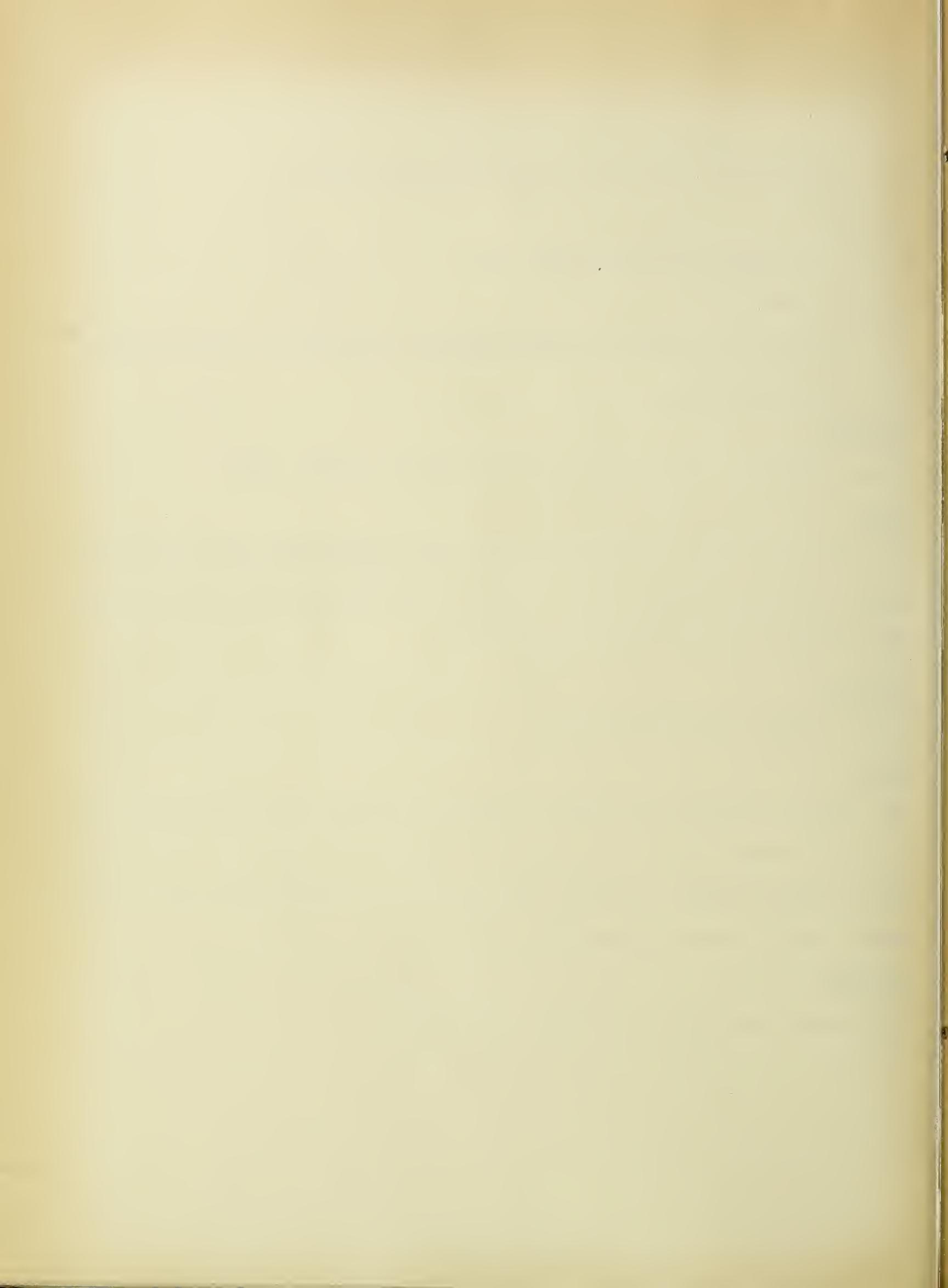
I notice this cattle you talked about.

HOWL

Oh, they're not hard to come, but if you turn 'em loose they'd be in the British Isles in a couple of days. I'm going to increase my dairy herd, Estelle, and cut out corn. I heard I could get some good Angus cattle up near Lafayette, Indiana.

ESTELLE

And you'll keep your terriers, won't you?



HOWE

Keep 'em? I'll say I'll keep 'em. They're one of the best soil-saving measures I've got. Like I was telling Barney Haskins the other day, every township has a road grader, and these terraces aren't so hard to build. And look at the change they make in the land. You know my grandfather came over from England, where they've learned to work the soil for hundreds and hundreds of years, but he never saw anything like that field over there.

ESTELLE (softly)

I wish father could have lived to see this farm as it is today. I know he would give thanks.

HOWE

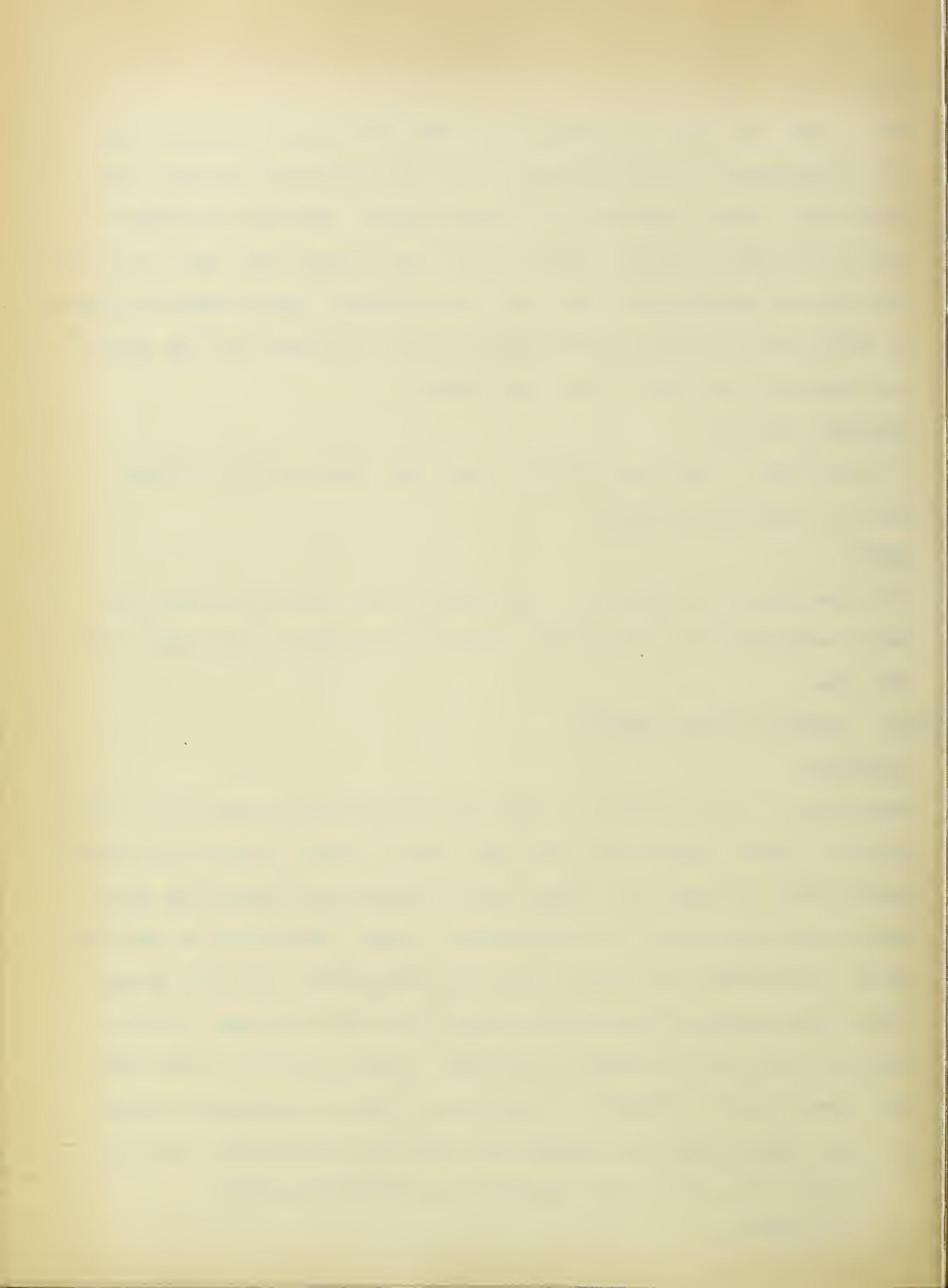
He knows about it, Estelle. Yes, he too was a man who loved the land, and wanted to protect it. Each of us must do our share to do the same.

ORGAN: SYMBOLIC MUSIC BEHIND

NARRATOR

Mennonites -- plain people. When they fled from persecution to the land of liberty they found, as they said, "a rich limestone country, beautifully adorned with sugar maple, hickory and black and white walnut, on the border of a delightful stream, abounding in the finest trout. The water was clear, cold and transparent, and the grape vines and clematis intertwining among the lofty branches of the majestic buttonwood formed a pleasant retreat from the noon beams of the summer sun." (PAUSE) It must have been an impressive sight -- but few sights are more impressive than the conservation farm of A. W. Howe, Jr., on a hill overlooking Middletown, Ohio.

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.



ANNOUNCER

This true story of the farming operations of A. W. Howe, Jr., and his wife Estelle, has been the 182nd consecutive episode of "Fortunes Washed Away", and was brought to you through the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture. And now, speaking for that organization once again is Ewing Jones.

JONES

(AD LIBS NECESSARY TIME)

and now, _____, if you please, the so-called "Eleventh Commandment."

ORGAN: Sneak in DEEP RIVER

ANNOUNCER

"Thou shalt inherit the holy earth as a faithful steward, conserving its resources and productivity from generation to generation. Thou shalt safeguard thy fields from soil erosion, thy living waters from drying up, thy forests from desolation, and protect thy hills from overgrazing by thy herds, so that thy descendants may have abundance forever. If any shall fail in this stewardship of the land thy fruitful fields shall become sterile stony ground and wasting gullies, and thy descendants shall decrease and live in poverty or be destroyed from off the face of the earth."

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

